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04150-UPS

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 7 and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Gilligan, and claims 3-6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gilligan.

The gist of the instant invention is to provide a method and structure for packaging **an optics device that includes at least an optics component in addition to optical fibers** hermetically. The optics components in the optics device may be optical add/drop filters, optical couplers, optical isolators, polarization beam combiners, or other fiber optic sub-assemblies composed of hybrid components. The optics device contains an optics sub-assembly which has its specific function. The objective of the invention is to provide a package which can isolate the sub-assembly and optical fibers from the external environment. Accordingly, at each end of the optics device either a housing cap or a sleeve is hermetically surrounded and sealed by a housing tube which encloses the optics device. Furthermore, **a free space surrounding a section of the fiber is provided within the optics device so as to allow thermal expansion and bending of the fiber without causing damage or functional degradation to the optics device.**

Gilligan discloses a fiber-optic connector comprising a housing and an internal core member defining a channel for receiving an optical fiber. The connector may include a ferrule carrying an optical fiber as a stub having a distal end flush with the front face of the ferrule and a proximal end extending from the rear face of the ferrule. It should be noted that the key objective of the fiber optic connector is to provide precise connection

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of the front end of the fiber so as to minimize the loss of the light. As can be seen from the disclosure of Gilligan, there is no teaching of packaging an optical component which is not a fiber. There is no free space surrounding the fiber to allow bending and thermal expansion within the connector. As shown in FIG. 2 of Gilligan, the fiber is surrounded by the plunger member 21 and the core member 12 (page 2, paragraph [0023]).

Accordingly, claim 1 is amended to include the limitation of said fiber optics sub-assembly including at least one optics component which is not a fiber to distinguish over the cited prior art. The fact that said first section of said second fiber is surrounded by a free space to allow said first section to expand or bend freely is also recited in claim 1. From the above comparison and analysis, applicants respectfully submit that the amended claim 1 should be allowable because the cited prior art neither teaches nor suggests the subject matter of the instant invention which is not obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art. By virtue of dependency, claims 2-10 should also be allowable. Claims 11-13 are also amended to include similar limitations described above in the packaging structure and therefore should be allowable.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the instant invention differs from the cited prior art. The physical difference results in different effects and is not obvious. A few informalities in the claims are also corrected in the above amendment. The amended claims 1-13 have overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(c) and §103(a) and should be patentable. The specification has been amended to correct a few editorial and

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grammatical errors. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued for the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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